

**Tuesday, September 16, 2008**

**[From the Coeur d'Alene Press](#)**

- No education news stories posted online today.

**[From the Spokesman-Review](#)**

- No education news stories posted online today.

**[From the Moscow Pullman Daily News \(password required\)](#)**

- HIS VIEW: Daily News editorial based on inaccurate information (Commentary)
- Study: Colleges spend billions to prep freshmen
- St. Mary's School celebrates 100 years

**[From the Lewiston Tribune \(password required\)](#)**

- No education news stories posted online today.

**[From the Idaho-Press Tribune, Nampa](#)**

- Luna's makes sense (editorial)
- College of Idaho hopes to elect new leader by year's end
- New Riverstone leader to boost school's appeal

**[From the Twin Falls Times-News](#)**

- More than 50 apply for College of Idaho's top job

**[From the Idaho State Journal \(password Required\)](#)**

- Making case for a med school
- Free computers
- Fulfilling dream in search for knowledge

**[From the Idaho Falls Post Register \(password required\)](#)**

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FROM THE COEUR D'ALENE PRESS

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FROM THE MOSCOW PULLMAN DAILY NEWS (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

**HIS VIEW: Daily News editorial based on inaccurate information (Commentary)**

By Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna

The *Moscow-Pullman Daily News* published an editorial (Opinion, Sept. 8) about my budget request for Idaho's public schools that was based on incorrect data that was not first confirmed with me or my office. Let me take this opportunity to give the readers correct information so they can form an opinion based on accurate data.

The editorial stated: "Luna plans to ask for \$1.495 billion a whopping \$405 million increase over the 2006 fiscal year budget proposed by his predecessor, Marilyn Howard."

That is not true.

Yes, I have requested a 5.4-percent increase over the current year - nearly half of which will cover growth in the student population - but the majority of the "whopping" increase referenced in the editorial is not an actual increase in the funding that Idaho schools received.

That's because in August 2006, before I was elected as state superintendent, the Idaho Legislature met for a special session and passed House Bill 1, which shifted local property taxes to the state's General Fund in an effort to relieve rising property taxes for many Idahoans. This shift automatically added about \$250 million to the public schools budget. While this change in law appeared to increase the public schools budget, it did not give Idaho schools an additional \$250 million, as the editorial stated. It simply shifted the funding source from local property taxes to the state.

While making comparisons between me and my predecessor, the editorial also failed to mention that while I have requested a 5.4-percent increase for the upcoming year, my predecessor requested increases of 9.2 percent a year, on average.

Since I took office 20 months ago, I have strived to be fiscally responsible when it comes to funding education in Idaho because I know where the money comes from - hardworking taxpayers. As a small business owner, a former school board member and an Idaho taxpayer, I

know each and every tax dollar is precious and limited. Whenever I request new funding, I ensure that it goes where we need it most: the classroom.

I have taken this approach at the state Department of Education. My staff and I have worked hard to cut administrative costs. Why? Because I strongly believe that every dollar saved at the administrative level is one more dollar we can put into the classroom. I have not requested funding for any additional employee positions, but through efficiencies and savings, I found the money to create new positions, such as an Indian Education Coordinator, to provide more technical assistance to Idaho schools and students. We also have found money within the department to give schools the opportunity to try new and innovative programs, such as the First Move chess curriculum used in elementary schools, all without asking taxpayers for additional funding.

Because of this approach, we now have a responsible public schools budget that provides additional money for classroom supplies and materials, textbooks and remediation programs to help students who struggle academically. We also have a statewide Idaho Math Initiative that gives Idaho educators the tools they need to raise student achievement in math. We are developing a state Longitudinal Data System, which will provide parents, educators and policymakers with the current and accurate information needed to make better informed decisions in education on a daily basis. This new budget request includes funding for a statewide dual credit program that will give all Idaho juniors and seniors the opportunity to take college or professional-technical courses while still in high school.

As state superintendent, I cannot operate in a vacuum. I never craft a public schools budget without considering our state's economy. I recognize this will be a tight budget year, and knowing this, I have submitted a prudent and responsible budget request for Fiscal Year 2010 that provides the critical funding we need to improve student achievement across Idaho.

**Tom Luna** is Idaho superintendent of public instruction.

### **Study: Colleges spend billions to prep freshmen**

Posted on: Monday, September 15, 2008

It's a tough lesson for millions of students just now arriving on campus: even if you have a high school diploma, you may not be ready for college.

In fact, a new study calculates one-third of American college students have to enroll in remedial classes.

The bill to colleges and taxpayers for trying to bring those students up to speed on material they were supposed to learn in high school comes to between \$2.3 billion and \$2.9 billion annually.

"That is a very large cost, but there is an additional cost and that's the cost to the students," said former Colorado Gov. Roy Romer, chairman of the group Strong American Schools, which

issued the report "Diploma to Nowhere" today. "These students come out of high school really misled. They think they're prepared. They got a 3.0 and got through the curriculum they needed to get admitted, but they find what they learned wasn't adequate."

Washington State University spokesman James Tinney said WSU used to see about one-third of its incoming students having to enroll in a remedial math course offered at the Community Colleges of Spokane campus in Pullman.

He said that number has gone down in recent years, and incoming students at WSU are more prepared than they used to be.

"I think in Washington, the feeling is that research institutions are not the places to go if students need remedial help," Tinney said.

According to the University of Idaho registrar's office Web site, the UI offers a remedial English class for a \$100 fee. There is no remedial math class offered.

Gordon Thomas, director of writing in the UI English department, said the question of which students need remedial assistance is a complicated one. Less than 5 percent of students in UI English composition classes are enrolled in the remedial composition class, English 090.

He said there seems to be fewer students who need remedial help than in the past.

"Of course, it depends on the type of institution you are. Of course WSU and UI are going to have much lower numbers than national averages," Thomas said.

Christina Jeronimo was an "A" student in high school English, but was placed in a remedial course when she arrived at Long Beach City College in California. The course was valuable in some ways but also frustrating and time-consuming. Now in her third year of community college, she'd hoped to transfer to UCLA by now.

Like many college students, she wishes she'd been worked a little harder in high school.

"There's a gap," said Jeronimo, who hopes to study psychology. "The demands of the high school teachers aren't as great as the demands for college. Sometimes they just baby us."

The problem of colleges devoting huge amounts of time and money to remediation isn't new, though its scale and cost has been difficult to measure. The latest report gives somewhat larger estimates than some previous studies, though it is not out of line with trends suggested in others, said Hunter Boylan, an expert at Appalachian State University in North Carolina, who was not connected with the report.

Analyzing federal data, the report estimates 43 percent of community college students require remediation, as do 29 percent of students at public four-year universities, with higher numbers in some places. For instance, four in five Oklahoma community college students need remedial

coursework, and three in five in the giant California State university system need help in English, math or both.

The cost is as high as \$2,000 per student in community colleges and \$2,500 in four-year universities.

Jeronimo was hardly alone at Long Beach City College, where 95 percent of students need remedial coursework, according to President Eloy Oakley.

"It's the No. 1 issue to Long Beach City College and the entire California community college system, easily," Oakley said. "I don't believe that the public in general really understands the magnitude of the problem."

Dumping the remedial students into large classes isn't necessarily expensive for colleges, but it's also not very effective either. But smaller classes typically require more attention and money. Some states have refused to fund remedial courses at the university level. In California, Oakley said, state funding for community colleges favors credit courses. Remediation (or "basic skills" as he and many educators call it) is typically noncredit.

Educators are working to improve remedial courses. Long Beach is developing "success areas" that give extra time and attention to students. Community colleges in Tennessee have completely redesigned giant introductory and remedial courses where many students were struggling.

Boylan says colleges are learning such courses must also teach study skills to be effective.

Indeed, students often report that the hardest aspect of the transition to college isn't the material. It's the new rhythm and structure of college-level work.

"One of the things that they don't teach in high school is time management," Jeronimo said.

Eric Paris, who earned a 3.8 high school GPA but is finding his freshman year at Virginia Tech much more challenging, says the big difference is "it's all on my own." In class, "it's up to me if I want to sit on Facebook or pay attention." He also wishes he'd taken more challenging high school classes but thought a high GPA was more important.

Boylan says the gap between what high schools teach and what colleges expect isn't the only problem. He says there's often a mismatch, with high schools and colleges teaching material in different ways.

It's true that only recently have K-12 and higher education begun talking seriously about aligning standards. But Romer, who has also headed the Los Angeles Unified School District, doesn't buy that it's a communication problem.

"We're not expecting enough of our youngsters and the institutions that train them," he said.

## **St. Mary's School celebrates 100 years**

Alumni young and old join in school's century celebration

By Halley Griffin, Daily News staff writer

Posted on: Monday, September 15, 2008

George Russell has carried a creased paper clover in his wallet for half a century.

The clover has four leaves for luck and was made for Russell, 87, by his daughter, Julie, when she was a kindergartner at St. Mary's Catholic School in Moscow.

Russell showed off the clover Sunday at a celebration of the K-6 school's centennial and dedication of its new gymnasium. He said he was there to celebrate as a member of St. Mary's parish, and a parent of six St. Mary's graduates.

Sister Dolores Helbling also came to celebrate with the school. She's a member of the St. Mary's class of 1941.

"It's a full circle of life," Helbling said.

Other, more recent alumni also were present.

Paul Wimer graduated from St. Mary's in 2001 and now plays baseball for Wenatchee Valley Community College. He said he was leaving Sunday to go back to school, but decided to stick around for the centennial activities first.

"It's a good school with good teachers," he said, grinning at his mother, Pam, who teaches third grade at St. Mary's.

For many, the day brought with it a sense of relief. The expansion project was born about five years ago, said former school board president Charlie Shrope, but faced many setbacks along the way. Shrope estimated delayed permits and other setbacks cost the school and donors \$250,000.

"We've been facing a lot of adversity but everyone believed in the school and pressed on," he said. Shrope and his family moved to Spokane two years ago, but came back to Moscow to celebrate with the school.

Chris Reisenauer, the father of three St. Mary's graduates, worked on the building committee for the expansion project.

"I'm very, very proud of the school, and I'm proud to be a part of it," he said.

Assistant Principal Peggy Quesnell said she's excited to begin the next 100 years.

Father Joseph Schmidt, pastor of St. Mary's parish, said he felt "jubilant."

"It's a really good feeling of something coming together. It's just a very, very happy day," he said.

The gym was blessed by Bishop Michael Driscoll of the Diocese of Boise while students, staff, alumni and friends of the school sang "This is holy ground, we're standing on holy ground."

For Helbling, the song choice was appropriate.

"It really is holy ground for me," she said.

As for the students, they're just excited to play basketball in the new gym.

"It's wonderful," said third-grader Anthony Plummer. "There are lots of friendly faces, and I'm so glad we got the new gym."

"It's very, very exciting," added fourth-grader Cooper Volk.

#### FROM THE LEWISTON TRIBUNE (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

**No education news stories posted online today.**

#### FROM THE IDAHO-PRESS TRIBUNE, NAMPA

##### **Luna's makes sense (editorial)**

Like the version he proposed a year ago, the public schools budget request outlined by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna is smart and sensible.

The \$1.4 billion spending plan represents a \$69 million increase over the present budget, about 5.2 percent more.

What's important about his proposal is that he targets specific, defensible programs in the classroom and doesn't push for increased bureaucracy at the state level.

Consider these much-needed requests:

n \$5.3 million for his Idaho Math Initiative. Luna seeks a \$1.3 million increase from the present year's budget to better help students who struggle with math as well as high-achieving students who need advanced opportunities. The program builds upon efforts already under way to help improve Idaho students' math performance.

n \$3.5 million to implement a statewide dual-credit program to allow high school juniors and seniors to take up to 12 college or professional-technical credits in their final two years of high school. Luna notes that Idaho has a solid high school graduation rate, but one of the lowest rates of graduates who go on to college. A dual-credit program would let high school students get their foot in the door at a more-affordable cost.

n \$2.7 million to improve gifted and talented programs. The superintendent says remedial programs for students who fall behind have improved because of statewide testing and accountability requirements, and now it's time to beef up programs for high-performing youth.

n \$5.7 million for classroom supplies. A year ago, Luna successfully targeted \$350 for each teacher to purchase classroom supplies. This year, he wants to expand that to include a stipend for school librarians as well. He says that because of competing priorities, teachers in the past had to choose to buy some materials out of their own pockets or do without. He also concedes that even with the specific funding to help, many teachers will continue to use their own money.

n \$9.95 million for textbooks to ensure schools can have adequate, updated instruction materials. This continues a targeted program from the current year's budget.

n \$9.15 million in technology grants for schools to purchase updated equipment, continuing a program already in place.

n \$2.8 million for the Idaho Reading Initiative, continuing efforts under way to improve reading skills.

Luna also wants to try again with a teacher pay plan that includes some pay-for-performance component. He's requested an average 3.5 percent increase in teacher pay, a third of which would increase the base pay for teachers and raise the minimum teacher salary. He wants the remaining two-thirds to go into a merit pay system, which he says is needed to reward highperforming teachers.

In the last legislative session, Luna's iStars plan ran into plenty of criticism and ultimately bogged down in the details. With four months until the next round, he says he's confident he and others can find a system that will pass muster.

One of his arguments is interesting: The schools chief believes the lack of merit pay holds teacher pay back in the Legislature. He noted that state employees, who do have merit pay, received average pay increases of 5.6 percent in 2006 and 3 percent in 2007, compared to 3 percent and 2.4 percent respectively for teachers. It would be good for all parties to come up with a plan that would work.

It's also critical to note that Luna isn't asking for more staff in his own department. In fact, he recently reorganized the agency's offices in a building near the Statehouse and managed to condense space and save money.

By getting rid of file cabinets, unnecessary printers and surplus office furniture, the Department of Education returned 4,649 square feet of space to the state, saving nearly \$44,000 a year.

The superintendent's proposal is just the kind of student-focused, classroom-oriented spending Idahans can support.

## FROM THE IDAHO STATESMAN

### **College of Idaho hopes to elect new leader by year's end**

A spokeswoman says more than 50 people applied for the job and the college isn't looking for more applications

More than 50 people have applied to be the next president of the College of Idaho, the state's only private liberal arts college.

Jennifer Oxley, spokeswoman for the Caldwell college, said several applicants were nominated for the position, others were contacted by a search firm hired by the college and some sent in applications on their own.

Oxley said the college's search committee is expected to meet at the end of this month to review applications and start interviews. They hope to announce a new president by the end of the year.

The president of that committee is state Sen. John McGee, R-Caldwell, a 1995 graduate of C of I who was student body president in his sophomore year. The committee includes alumni, faculty, students, community members and trustees. It started meeting over the summer.

"We're looking for a dynamic leader that can lead the best academic institution in the state of Idaho," said McGee.

Current College of Idaho President Bob Hoover, who was president of the University of Idaho until problems with its Boise-based campus expansion led to his resignation from U of I in 2003, announced in March that he would leave his post at the end of the 2008-2009 academic year.

College of Idaho recently announced a drive to raise \$175 million over the next 10 years and to raise enrollment from 825 to 1,000 students. The College changed its name to Albertson College in 1991, and last fall changed it back to College of Idaho, winning praise from alumni.

Oxley declined to release how much Hoover is earning as president and said she could not release information about applicants because the college had signed confidentiality agreements with them.

At this state of the process, "we're not really seeking additional applicants," Oxley noted.

### **New Riverstone leader to boost school's appeal**

#### **RIVERSTONE FACTS**

Opened: 1997

Number of students: 315

Cost to attend: \$8,100 to \$10,400, depending on grade level. Many students receive scholarships.

Campuses: K-9 at 5493 Warm Springs Ave., Boise; grades 10-12 at 214 S. Broadway Ave., Boise.

BY BILL ROBERTS - broberts@idahostatesman.com

Edition Date: 09/16/08

Andrew Derry was born to a psychiatric nurse and a coal miner in a rural British town 46 years ago.

School was a place to play rugby. "I would ... train seven days a week," he said.

But the one-time high school rugby player developed a fondness for teaching physics and outdoor education and for schools with an international academic flair.

In July, he came from Switzerland to become head of school at Riverstone International School in Boise.

The private school uses the International Baccalaureate curriculum, in which high school students engage in a rigorous, broad-based set of studies to meet widely recognized international education standards.

He's been asked to expand the International Baccalaureate program down to kindergarten and help Riverstone build a new elementary school building on its Warm Springs Avenue campus.

Derry talked with the Idaho Statesman about his vision.

Q: What is it about this International Baccalaureate curriculum that so appeals to you?

A: It's the fact that in whatever way we look at our it, our children, they are growing up in a world that is evermore entwined. It's ever smaller. Whether you work from home or whether you travel the globe, the chances are students these days, when they leave school, if they want to be successful are going to have some kind of global connection somewhere.

It gives them a real strong sense of identity of where they come from. So if you're American, it really makes you appreciate the American culture. You use that foundation to look out on the world.

Q: So students who come here and who are in this International Baccalaureate program, what are they getting that kids aren't getting if they go to a regular public high school?

A: The approach is different. We expect a lot of involvement from our students. This is not "Sit in class and listen to the teacher." The science is not cookbook science. I remember when I went to school and I got to science class, you were given a list of instructions to follow and you'd follow them almost like baking a cake. And then the result was at the end. Nothing is like that here. What we do is we pose problems for the students. We get them to come up with hypotheses, make predictions and come up with solutions.

Q: How do you see this school in the realm of International Baccalaureate schools?

A: We need to get our students out into the world more ... to have more exchanges, more video conference links. We need to find ways of bringing more international students into Boise.

Q: Let's talk first about links. What do you do and what would you like to do?

A: Start at a very, very young age and ... create links with various schools around the world. We do that to start off with video conferencing. We could do the American Revolution, for example, and we could lead that discussion because we're in the U.S.

When you get to about sixth grade, you start to look at week- or two-week long exchanges where we take a whole class and we go and visit that school and we do activities with that school.

(In) ninth or 10th grade we are looking at longer exchanges. We are starting that right now.

Q: When would you like to see this be fulfilled?

A: I think we'll have a pretty developed program by next academic year.

Q: Where are some places that students here may find themselves?

A: Spain is an obvious one because we have a developed Spanish program. Also, I would want to look in China. I'd want to look at South America.

Q: For this school what do you see as the single biggest challenge?

A: I think probably the biggest challenge is Idaho and Boise are a little-known commodity, perhaps, to the rest of the world. I don't mean that in a negative way. This is such a hidden gem, and the rest of the world just does not know what this place is like. Let the students at Boise know what's out there in the world and let the world know what is here. It's good for our students. It's good for the rest of the world.

#### FROM THE TWIN FALLS TIMES-NEWS

#### **More than 50 apply for College of Idaho's top job**

BOISE, Idaho - An official says more than 50 people have applied to be the next president of the College of Idaho in Caldwell.

Spokeswoman Jennifer Oxley says a search firm contacted some of the applicants, some were nominated, and others sent in applications on their own.

Oxley tells the Idaho Statesman that the school's search committee will meet at the end of this month to review applications and start interviews.

A new president is expected to be named at the end of the year to replace Bob Hoover, who announced in March he would leave at the end of this academic year.

The school is the state's only private liberal arts college.

### FROM THE IDAHO STATE JOURNAL (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

#### **Making case for a med school**

BOISE ? Unlike his counterparts, Idaho State University President Arthur Vailas largely supports establishing a medical school in Idaho, and has even earned backing from Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter who called for the Gem State to establish its own program.

Vailas presented his concept for a distributive medical school to a joint interim legislative committee on medical education Monday. He also discussed ISU's existing resources for such a program.

During a brief appearance before the committee, Otter said the existing medical program has been ineffective in recent years, and called for a system that will adequately alleviate the increasing shortage of doctors in the Gem State.

"I'm terribly disappointed in WWAMI (the Wyoming, Washington, Alaska, Montana and Idaho medical program)," Otter told those in attendance Monday. "It's not doing its job."

WWAMI reserves a limited number of seats for medical students from Idaho and the four other states at the University of Washington's School of Medicine.

Vailas' distributive model would house students at a fixed campus for the first two years of the medical program, and eventually send them out to perform clerkships at a number of different clinics throughout the state.

The ISU president had previously touted the system, but showed the model for the first time Monday, where he received support from lawmakers and the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the official group in charging of granting full accreditation to medical programs in the United States.

Bruce Newcomb, Boise State University's director of government affairs, supported establishing a medical program, but did not rule out the possibility of expanding WWAMI. University of Idaho President Stephen Daley-Laursen was also in favor of expanding the existing medical program, asserting that it has earned more success than 14 other state medical schools.

However, Vailas said the state needs to look at a solution that will immediately produce more in-state doctors, and save on health care costs.

"I think we need to focus on (a medical program) in Idaho," he said. "So the question is "Can the state of Idaho offer a medical degree? The state does have the resources."

Aside from the mandatory two-year classroom curriculum and clerkships, the model would accept medical students from across the state, enroll 50 to 60 accepted applicants annually, and could begin classes by as early as 2011.

Vailas said medical programs go through three steps before becoming fully accredited.

During the first step, a program obtains a preliminary accreditation about 12 to 18 months before classes begin. The program then receives a provisional accreditation during its first class' second year, and receives full accreditation by the class' fourth and final year.

The accreditation process requires each school to achieve a commendable standard with the curriculum it offers. The programs also need to have a mission, an efficient staff, faculty resources, and adequate funding.

With those steps, Vailas said that Idaho could have a medical program by around 2011 or 2012. "Or at least I would hope so," he said, adding that those dates are a best-case scenario.

Otter said the Gem State would benefit by buying up more seats from WWAMI, but he contended the state should look into a wider scope of options for improving medical education in a state that sits at 49th in the number of doctors per capita.

## **Free computers**

A.F. school gets machines with grant

BY CASEY SANTEE csantee@journalnet.com

AMERICAN FALLS — With three schoolage siblings and a father who works online from home, seventh-grader Savannah Ward often got the short end of the stick when she needed the family computer for homework.

But thanks to the federal GEAR UP grant and Boise-based Computers For Kids, she doesn't have to worry about that problem anymore. Savannah, 12, is one of 156 William Thomas Middle School students who received computers of their own last Friday.

"I'm excited because I never really get time on the computer," Savannah said, adding that she will put it in her room. "I'll use it to look up stuff for social studies and math."

Jennifer Simpson, GEAR UP coordinator for the American Falls School District, said that the program is funded through a federal grant, its goal to provide economically disadvantaged middle school students with an awareness of the college entrance process.

Simpson said the state gets a block grant for GEAR UP, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, and then distributes the money to school districts with a high number of students who qualify for free or reduced lunches.

GEAR UP started nationally in the late 1990s and Idaho began getting funding two years ago. Last year, the program targeted drug prevention among middle schoolers.

This year, GEAR UP partnered with Computers For Kids, an organization which helps bridge the digital divide by refurbishing used computers and donating them to children. The only cost is

a \$35 application fee and \$10 to make the computers Internet ready. That cost is paid by the grant funding.

To ensure the families can afford Internet service, the district is partnering with a local provider, which has offered dial-up service for \$10 per month.

The school required each recipient to write an essay explaining their need.

“For many of the students, this was their first household computer,” Simpson said. “We think that almost all, if not all, of our students have one now.”

Simpson said that previously, many students had to go to the local library or stay late at school to get their assignments done. She added that computers are a necessity for college-bound students because they must submit enrollment and financial aid applications online.

Savanah’s mother, Amy, said now that her daughter has a computer of her own, it will simplify life for the whole family by reducing the shuffle.

“It seems like as time goes on, children have to do more and more homework online,” Amy said. “For us, it gets very complicated.”

## **Fulfilling dream in search for knowledge**

ISU prof takes over for well-known retired researcher

BY BILL SCHAEFER [billscha@journalnet.com](mailto:billscha@journalnet.com)

scholarly activity with physical labor,” said Baxter, explaining how his career path had eventually brought him to Idaho

Editor’s note: This is the final installment of a three-part series on the research team of Idaho State University professor emeritus Wayne Minshall into the Yellowstone fires that devastated the park 20 years ago.

Colden Baxter is right where he has dreamed of being since his freshman days at the University of Oregon. In the midst of intellectual pursuits at a university level.

“What I love about the university and what I discovered early on, I was into field science and the melding of mental and State University. “I have never wanted to be anywhere else but a university because I was just so into it,” he said.

On the third floor of the Gale Life Sciences building on the ISU campus is the Stream Ecology Center. Crammed into a third-floor corner of the building, you might find Colden Baxter, Ph. D., assistant professor of biology, sequestered in his cramped office.

He might be there, if he isn’t teaching a class, or on a field trip, or presenting a paper at a symposium somewhere.

When Colden Baxter was offered the position as director of the Stream Ecology Center in 2005, succeeding Wayne Minshall’s tenure, one reason Baxter accepted the job was the chance to work with Minshall, one of the leaders in stream ecology studies.

“One of the things that was really appealing to me about this situation here was I could see there was an opportunity to learn from somebody again,” said Baxter last week in his office at the center, “he’s certainly one of the preeminent stream ecologists in the world

“On one level he is a teacher and mentor to me, our lab group is strengthened by the ‘wise old sage.’ It’s hard to imagine being in this position without him,” said Baxter, “the background of the program he built attracts great students and has made it much easier for me to be successful.”

He attributes the seamless transition between Minshall's leadership and his to their similar backgrounds and work ethics.

"He and I, we both have some things in common, not just that we are both stream ecologists," said Baxter, "we both grew up in a rural lifestyle. He's a lot like my father and my grandfather in certain characteristics and it makes it easy to interact with him."

During the recent backcountry field research trip to Yellowstone National Park, on the 20-year anniversary of the fires that burned almost 800,000 acres of the park, Baxter was able to tap into the Minshall's wealth of knowledge from his previous field trips dating back to when the fires were still smoldering in the fall of 1988.

"For me, this trip is taking the time to go out to these places and participate in the process of collecting data and having discussions with him in the field," Baxter said.

There's a real sense of appreciation in Baxter's voice when he speaks of Minshall's ongoing participation at the Stream Ecology Center.

"Taking the time to transfer the knowledge instead of just walking out the door and saying, 'I'm done with that,'" said Baxter, "instead, he has an office in our lab, he comes in every week, he interacts with my students. He's not required to do that but he's stayed very dedicated to the success of the program and I really appreciate that."

Minshall speaks approvingly of Baxter and appreciates the opportunity to continue advising and mentoring students.

"Colden has been very generous in allowing me to collaborate with him and allowing me a presence in the university," Minshall said while sitting around the campfire one night at Yellowstone.

"It's great to be able to see another chapter unfold and to have the chance to toy with that intellectually, it's fun to see the story unravel or unwind" said Minshall of watching Baxter taking over the Stream Ecology Center and his Yellowstone fire research.

"Colden is so enthusiastic in not only following up in what we have done but expanding on it and taking it in new directions.

"There's a new beginning or an extension of what we started that can go on infinitely into the future. Depending on what other people decide. So, it's a termination point at one stage and it's a continuation point in another context," Minshall said speaking of the end of his tenure and the beginnings of Baxter's tenure.

And the direction that Colden Baxter wants to take the Stream Ecology Center is to expand its studies into larger river systems and the interconnectedness of land and water.

"I've already begun to take the SEC out of the stream and into the watershed," said Baxter of his future plans for the center. "One of my main contributions so far has been in expanding the scope of our investigations to include the connections between land and water," he said.

He sees this as an expansion of Minshall's initial studies and taking the research from streams to river systems.

"We're working our way into more work in bigger river settings," Baxter said. "The studies of food webs and the way that energy flows in ecosystems in big rivers versus small streams. And that's important because some of the most important regional issues are associated with the management of our big rivers.

Baxter said he wouldn't abandon the research on wildfire given the legacy that exists here, he merely wants to expand on the "questions that need to be asked."

He's not abandoning, just expanding.

“New tools, new questions, but some of the same old themes, I would say and some of the basic, fundamental philosophies remain the same,” said Baxter summarizing his vision for the Stream Ecology Center and the next generation of students and researchers that find their way to the third floor corner of the Gale Life Sciences building at ISU.

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